

Baptism is Ineffectual

The baptism of an unconscious person who is preparing for baptism is invalid so how could the baptism of a baby be valid? The baptised are no better or worse than the unbaptised

Most of us in the west were taken to the Church as a baby when the priest or minister poured water on us to make us Christians as he said, "I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit".

John 3:5. When having a chat with Nicodemus, Jesus claimed that only a person born of water and the Holy Spirit could go to Heaven, "Unless a man is born of water and [even] the Spirit, he cannot [ever] enter the Kingdom of God". The Roman Church has declared that this is referring to the power of baptism to heal you of original sin and the inclination to rebel against God and goodness that it entails. The word born again imply that a reborn person is very very different from an ordinary person. The person is a sinner and is reborn as holy. It is like the person has been remade. Nobody needs to do much research to see that baptism has not done that for anybody. If baptism is the start of the journey to sainthood as some say, then it is not a new birth at all. It is not a radical change.

The Bible says that when you get saved or born again you cease to have the old sin nature, that is, instead of being inevitably selfish and doing everything for an ulterior motive, God changes you into a new person who does not have to sin anymore. So the new birth will result in a changed life. Paul said that we die when born again to rise to a new life with God. He said we put off the old man and put on the new man in Jesus Christ.

The Bible calls what happens when we become a member of the Christian Church the new birth because it is a birth to a new and changed life in which we lovingly do good works for God. Catholic baptism cannot be the new birth when even a person who has no intention of loving God can receive it validly and be made a member of the Church. All it does in such cases is put a mark on the soul and you need more than to be entitled to be called reborn. When we are born into this world we are born into a new kind of life so the idea behind calling spiritual transformation rebirth is that we enter a new life and put the life of sin behind us. The Church would decree that baptisms contracted in insincerity should be repeated if it knew what it was talking about.

Then considering what the Bible says, why are those who are baptised as infants no more moral and so often worse and more devious and deceptive than those who have been reborn in adulthood? Experience shows that baptism of infants does not work and so is immoral. It is a waste of time. It is null and void.

In 1944 the Church of England found that though 66% of children were baptised only 9% went forward for confirmation and only about 3-4% had any interest in religion (page 12, The Only Way of Salvation). If there were any power in baptism many more would be interested in religion. If the Church really cared about God and the new birth it would make sure that only people who showed evidence of being born again would be permitted to proceed to the sacrament of confirmation. Without that evidence there is no reason to hold that the candidates accepted the regeneration offered to them in baptism.

Original sin is in essence my self-will. It is the desire to get my own way and not God's. But that never goes away because anything I do I know I do it to satisfy some urge in me. Even if I dash to the vet with my neighbour's sick dog I am doing it because I like to. I like it enough to do it even if I say and feel I hate doing it. I am not doing it for God even if I believe I do but for my feelings. I am like this all the time so baptism is just a human rite devoid of divine power because it does not forgive original sin. It is still there as strong as ever. Moreover, the more good I do the further I am away from God's will for then it is harder to see that I am motivated by good my way and not his way. The person who does good with a godless motive is nearly impossible to convert to God unlike the openly defiant sinner who sees her or his blackness in all its infernal grandeur. It is my perception of good I care about not his rules.

Christian parents are being naïve if they think some water on their baby is going to help it and the world. All it does is start the child on a regime that grooms it for self-deception.

What the Church calls original sin, Humanism calls self-esteem and self-esteem is the root of all human goodness so the doctrine of original sin is totally destructive and any believer that escapes this destruction escapes in so far as he or she accepts his or her right to be his or her own God. Self-will or original sin permeates all my thoughts and feelings and actions therefore the Protestant and biblical doctrine of total depravity (that nobody can do anything to please God for all are sinful) is true assuming self-will is depravity. But it is undeniable that we are wholly anti-god. The Roman Church knows that total depravity is true and still it denies it – it blesses sin by pretending not to notice.

It is bigotry to make a fuss to get your baby baptised. It's not doing to do the baby any good.

APPENDIX: IRA AND BAPTISM, WERE THE IRA RELIGIOUS TERRORISTS?

All agree that the IRA largely recruited from “tribal” Catholics and many say it was unconcerned about their religious beliefs (I would dispute that - many were mass goers). That does not absolve the religion of responsibility for a number of reasons. Baptism into the Catholic faith created an us versus them attitude. The Church knows that the only justification for baptism is if it really does lift most people into being exceptional people. The reality is that it makes no difference. In practice baptism is used to segregate and the Church might disapprove but when it knows what human nature is like and how it likes excuses for making differences between people the Church is to blame. Socrates and Gandhi were examples of people who would refuse baptism or Christianity but who were superb human beings. Religion is more than explicit religious acts. It is more of an orientation so one could be a religious terrorist without using the trappings of religion the way the Islamic state does.

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The WWW

Doctrinal Summary by Br Thomas Mary MICM. This page informs us that Catholic teaching is that if you hear of the Catholic Church and don't join it or study it your damnation is guaranteed. It affirms that babies that die without baptism will be banned from Heaven forever.